

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 11, 22 and 23 contain allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 3-5, 7-12 and 20-23 are amended. Claims 15, 18 and 19 are canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-14, 16, 17 and 20-23 are pending in this application.

In particular, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter recited in allowable claim 11 and in intervening claim 9. Claim 1 is also amended to recite additional structural and functional features for better clarity.

Claim 12 is rewritten in independent form and amended to incorporate features recited in allowable claim 22, as well as the subject matter of claims 15, 18 and 19. Applicants believe that the features incorporated in claim 12 from claim 22 render claim 12 patentable over the applied references.

Claims 3-5, 7-11 and 20-23 are amended in view of the amendments to claims 1 and 12, for better clarity, and/or to recite additional features disclosed in the specification. In particular, claim 4 is amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Figs. 13-15 and paragraphs [0081] - [0083]. Claim 5 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 9, and to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Figs. 13-15 and paragraphs [0081] - [0083].

Claim 7 is amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, paragraph [0094]. Claims 8-11 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 12-16, and to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Fig. 17 and paragraph [0099].

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-10 and 12-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,108,355 to Zorabedian in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,157,025 to Katagiri et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

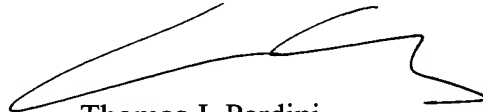
Claim 1 is amended to recite the subject matter of allowable claim 11, as outlined above. Claim 12 is rewritten in independent form and amended to recite features of allowable claim 22. The features incorporated from allowable claim 22 into claim 12 render claim 12 patentable over the applied references, Zorabedian and Katagiri.

In view of the above, claims 1 and 12, and claims 2-11 and 13, 14, 16, 17 and 20-23 depending therefrom, are patentable over the applied references. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-14, 16, 17 and 20-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: May 19, 2006

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